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WHOLE NO. 599



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## LIGHT FROM ARABIA ON CLASSICAL THINGS

The present paper calls for some special introductory statement in view of the fact that it is based upon a book<sup>1</sup> which has been in existence for almost forty years, and which has, at first hearing of its title, no particular appeal to readers of a classical periodical. In the eighties of the last century Charles M. Doughty, its author, a traveler, poet, and uncompromising Englishman and Christian, visited Arabia and spent two years among the nomads in a persistent attempt to secure copies of inscriptions and to learn by observation the traits of the Beduin people. His account of that visit, and the entirely unusual character both of the author and of the people whom he describes exercise a strange fascination<sup>2</sup>. The style is difficult. The punctuation, the phraseology, and the very narration itself, which strike one in the beginning as perverse, become by turns eccentric, then engaging, and, finally, absorbing. But the book will simply *not* read rapidly. With this fact in mind I have ventured to excerpt from the twelve hundred pages of text a number of passages which strike me as having a peculiar interest for the student of ancient life and customs.

Doughty's insight into the character of the Arabian nomad is so keen and penetrating that when he touches upon classical parallels his comments have an unusual value. In Gibbon's celebrated account<sup>3</sup> of the country and the people, while there are few actual errors, the total impression is misleading. The whole description smells badly of the lamp, and the Arabs move about as dim heroic figures in the misty atmosphere of Gibbon's rhetoric. It is quite otherwise in Doughty's book. The author himself said in the Preface to his first edition (1.v):

... The book is not milk for babes: it might be likened to a mirror, wherein is set forth faithfully some parcel of the soil of Arabia smelling of *sāmn* and camels. And such, I trust, for the persons, that if the words [written all-day from their mouths] were rehearsed to them in Arabic, there might every one, whose life is remembered therein, hear, as it were, his proper voice; and many a rude bystander, smiting his thigh, should bear witness and cry 'Ay *Wellah*, the sooth indeed!'

<sup>1</sup>Travels in Arabia Deserta, by Charles M. Doughty. With a New Preface by the Author, an Introduction by T. E. Lawrence, and All Original Maps, Plans and Illustrations (New York, Boni and Liveright, 2 volumes. Pp. 1 + 623; 600). The original edition appeared in 1888, but rapidly went out of print and became comparatively inaccessible. The book was set up in a new edition in 1921. It has seen several additional printings. For some reason which is not at all clear to me the work has attained almost the position of a 'best seller'.

<sup>2</sup>I have not felt that space would warrant any further description of the character or travels of this unique man. The reader who is interested will find an admirable brief account in the Introduction, by Colonel T. E. Lawrence (xv-xxv).

<sup>3</sup>The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, 5.311-332. The references to Gibbon in this paper (references by volume and page or pages) are to the edition by J. B. Bury, 7 volumes (New York, Macmillan, 1896-1902).

Finally, the motto *Prosit veritati* with which the Preface (1.vi) ends is not by any means idly chosen, but is significant of the ideals of the man and of the character of his workmanship.

In order to facilitate reference I have gathered selections of related interest into groups.

## ROMAN HISTORY AND TRADE

The following passage (2.175-176) is an observation on Augustus's attempt to conquer the peninsula of Arabia (25 B. C.). Doughty's version is particularly valuable in enabling us to see the expedition from a fresh point of view<sup>4</sup>:

... The Arabian deserts may be passed by armies strong enough to disperse the resistance of the frenetic but unwarlike inhabitants; but they should not be soldiers who cannot endure much and live of a little. The rulers of Egypt made war twenty years in Arabia; and they failed finally because they came with great cost to possess so poor a country. The Roman army sent by Augustus under Aelius Gallus to make a prey of the chimerical riches of Arabia Felix was 11,000 men, Italians and allies. They marched painfully over the waterless wastes six months! wilfully misled, as they supposed, by the Nabateans of Petra, their allies. In the end of their long marches they took Nejrān by assault: six camps further southward they met with a great multitude of the barbarous people assembled against them, at a brookside. In the battle there fell many thousands of the Arabs! and of the Romans and allies two soldiers. The Arabians fought, as men unwont to handle weapons, with slings, swords and lances and two-edged hatchets. The Romans, at their furthest, were only two marches from the frankincense country. In returning upwards the general led the feeble remnant of his soldiery, in no more than sixty marches, to the port of el-Héjr. The rest perished of misery in the long and terrible way of the wilderness: only seven Romans had fallen in battle!—Surely the knightly Roman poet deserved better than to be afterward disgraced, because he had not fulfilled the dreams of Caesar's avarice! Europeans, deceived by the Arabs' loquacity, have in every age a fantastic opinion of this unknown calamitous country.

Those Italians looking upon that dire waste of Nature in Arabia, and grudging because they must carry water upon camels, laid all to the perfidy of their guides. The Roman general found the inhabitants

<sup>4</sup>Compare for example the more deliberate but far less suggestive account in J. B. Bury, History of the Roman Empire, 121-122 (New York, American Book Company, no date). Bury sees more clearly the real purpose of the expedition—to safeguard the Red Sea route to India—but follows his classical sources into the error of believing in the natural wealth of the country "which in itself invited conquest", and in the "luxurious inhabitants". Gibbon's irony is noteworthy (5.313): "If it be compared with the rest of the peninsula, this sequestered region may truly deserve the appellation of the happy; and the splendid colouring of fancy and fiction has been suggested by contrast and countenanced by distance". Doughty's account takes the incident from the realm of book-knowledge and clarifies it with the insight of an eye-witness. Tenney Frank, A History of Rome, 479 (New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1923), suggests that the Romans, at least later under Trajan, were interested rather in the taxes on trade than in the trade itself. M. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire (Oxford University Press, American Branch, 1926), gives thorough and complete notes on the province: see his Index. The classical sources for the expedition are Strabo 16; Pliny, N. H. 6.28-29; Dio Cassius 53.29.

of the land 'A people unwarlike, half of them helping their living by merchandise, and half of them by robbing [such they are now]. Those ancient Arabs wore a cap, &c. Vol. I. pp. 160, 562, and let their locks grow to the full length: the most of them cut the beard, leaving the upper lip, others went unshaven.—"The nomads living in tents of hair-cloth are troublesome borderers," says Pliny [as they are to-day!] Strabo writing from the mouth of Gallus himself, who was his friend and Prefect of Egypt, describes so well the Arabian desert, that it cannot be bettered. "It is a sandy waste, with only a few palms and pits of water: the thorn [acacia] and the tamarisk grow there; the wandering Arabs lodge in tents, and are camel graziers."

The decadence of the Roman morale during the Arab conquests is strikingly put in the following passage (2.360):

... But what may be thought of the rottenness of the Roman power at that time? when her legionaries, clad in iron, could not sustain the furious running-on of weak-bodied and half-armed dissolute Arabians, in their ragged shirts! banded [which alone can band Semites!] by the (new) passion of religion, and their robber-like greediness of the spoil! the people through whose waste land Gallus had led a Roman army without battles five ages before, and returned with a European man's disdain of the thievish and unwarlike inhabitants!....

For the student of Roman trade there are many stray bits of information. Doughty's first three chapters (1.1-84) describe in detail the caravan of pilgrims traveling from Damascus to Mecca, and the size and the organization of this large body (a strange mixture of the devout and the mercenary) remind one forcibly of Strabo's description of the size of the caravans moving from Southern Arabia to Petra with gums, spices and perfumes: *μηδιαφέρειν μηδέν στρατούσιον*. Compare 1.6-7:

... It was near ten o'clock when we heard the signal gun fired, and then, without any disorder, litters were suddenly heaved and braced upon the bearing beasts, their charges laid upon the kneeling camels, and the thousands of riders, all born in the caravan countries, mounted in silence. As all is up the drivers are left standing upon their feet, or sit to rest out the latest moments on their heels: they with other camp and tent servants must ride those three hundred leagues upon their bare soles, although they faint; and are to measure the ground again upward with their weary feet from the holy places. At the second gun, fired a few moments after, the Pasha's litter advances and after him goes the head of the caravan column; other fifteen or twenty minutes we, who have places in the rear, must halt, that is until the long train is unfolded before us; then we strike our camels and the great pilgrimage is moving. There go commonly three or four camels abreast and seldom five; the length of the slow-footed multitude of men and cattle is near two miles, and the width some hundred yards in the open plains. The *hajjāj* were this year by their account (which may be above the truth) 6000 persons; of these more than half are serving men on foot; and 10,000 of all kinds of cattle, the most camels, then mules, hackneys, asses and a few dromedaries of Arabians re-

<sup>1</sup>The depreciation of the Arabians as soldiers is exaggerated. In the second and third centuries A. D., for example, they were among the very best of the provincial armies of the Roman Empire. See Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 617.

<sup>2</sup>Strabo, edited by August Meineke, 781 C (Leipzig, Teubner, 1925). See M. Rostovtzeff, 160, 537, for notes on the economic and legal aspects of the caravan.

turning in security of the great convoy to their own districts....

It is a matter of common knowledge that aromatics formed one of the staples of trade between Arabia and the West<sup>1</sup>. The social basis for this interest of the Arabs in perfumes and the consequent predominance of that article in trade is perhaps not generally known, and is, moreover, of great interest (1.438):

His brethren set down the sick herdsman in their arms, moaning, in great anguish of his uneasy riding,—and solaced is the rude man, in pain, to hear his own groaning. His brother Benneyi was ready in this extremity, I saw he handled a pack-needle, and was endeavouring with this to attain the rankling abscess at the hip-joint. He pricked it effectually, and there ran out in the sand a wonderful waste of corrupt matter. The lookers-on pinched their nostrils, and stood off; his brethren drew up quickly a lap of their kerchiefs. The Aarab stop their nostrils where is the least thought of any infection, which they can imagine to be as a kind of ill-odours in the air. In Semitic cities we find some nice opinions of this kind, as that aphorism of the Damascenes, "Who is lately vaccinated, should smell no flesh-meat;" good odours they esteem comfortable to the health, and so our old physicians held them (that which we perceive in smelling to sweet roses). The Aarab make them therefore nose-medicines, little bunches of certain herbs and odours, to hang a day or two in their nostrils, and in the nostrils of their camels. One evening at Medain, a scorpion showed itself at our hearth-stone; all gave back, one struck the vermin with a stick, and raked it on the embers! "Out! cries Haj Nejm, now thou hast singed the scorpion!" and they all rose from the place; but a little of the insect's juice sprinkling upon Hasan's forehead, he brushed it away with the back of his hand, and laughing, his only care was lest he should smell the roasting stench. Arabs are delighted with perfumes; the nomad housewives make treasure of any they have, with their medicines: they often asked me, "Hast thou no perfumes to sell?" When the Arabians commend a place they say, "There is a good air and sweet water!" but to tell you the ill nature of an ugly site, as el-Ally or Kheybar, they will say, "It lies drowned in a corrupt air, and thou drinkest there an unwholesome water."

#### CLASSICAL SURVIVALS

The sudden Hellenization, by Alexander and the Seleucids, of the fringes of the desert between Damascus and Petra and the vigorous and enthusiastic Romanization under the Emperors were, both of them, movements too ephemeral to withstand for long the tendency of the natives to return to old habits and customs. Many ruins are extant, however, to attest the spread of the externals of Greco-Roman civilization<sup>2</sup>. At Lejün, to the east and not far from the Dead Sea, Doughty says (1.20),

... A little apart to the southward I saw a square platform of masonry, with degrees all round, as it were a *suggestum* or *concionis locus*. Is Lejün perchance Legio? see we here a Roman military station, *statio*?....

After all, the actual contacts of Arabia with the Greek and the Latin world were limited and transitory, and the surviving record of those contacts, except for

<sup>1</sup>Pliny, N. H. 12, is devoted to perfumes, especially *tus* (frankincense). Compare Vergil, Georgics 2.117.

<sup>2</sup>For the remains of the trans-Jordan villages see M. Rostovtzeff, 249, 251; for the persistence of the native languages see Rostovtzeff, 544.

the ruins, is meager and accidental. The romantic career of Alexander the Great, for example, which impressed itself upon the imagination of the western world, entered also in a curious way into the tradition of the East (1.21):

I saw at Rabbath Moab cyclopean ground walls, laid without mortar, and street lines of basalt pavement, a colonnade and some small temple yet standing of Greekish building. If you will believe them, under the next great heap of stones lies Great Alexander, whom they call *Thū el Kurneyn* "of the two horns," and *meritō* as who in his life would needs be accounted an offspring of the god Ammon, with his ram's head. Iskander is now a saint among them and amongst the Greek Christians; for they will devoutly kiss his horned image appearing upon some old denars. I have seen, built in the outer wall of one of their churches in Palestine, an antique ornament of horned human heads, it may be of the old Canaanitish Sun-worshippers. We read in Genesis a like word, perhaps of the horned moon, Ashteroth *Karnaim*....

The Roman occupation of Syria brought with it extensive changes<sup>9</sup>, among which was the adoption of many Greek terms and titles. Some of these remained in force after the Roman period. On the inscriptions for which Doughty diligently searched are a few rare survivals of these terms, such, for example, as *στρατηγός* and *παρχός* (1.181, 182, 185). At least one Greek term survives, although in a very odd form, up to the present. This occurs in a passage in which Doughty gives an example of the native eagerness to know more about the stranger (1.153):

...Dahir was very discreet and covert to enquire what place I held in my own country; that seeing me regarded by the Dowla, he knew not what manner of man might be under my Arab cloak. When he pressed me I answered, "I have none other than the trade of *fūlsifa* (*φιλοσοφία*), it is pleasant to secede from the town to the silent desert"....

The traces of Greek Christianity are naturally somewhat more numerous (1.121, 1.135, 1.362):

We see scored upon the walls, within, a few names of old Mohammedan passengers, some line or two of Nabatean inscriptions, and the beginning of a word or name of happy augury *ΕΤΤΥ-*; these Greek letters only I have found at Medain Salih....

Under the Borj rocks I have often stayed to consider the stain of a cross in a border, made with ghrerra, or red ochre. What should this be! a cattle brand?—or the sign of Christ's death and trophy of his never ending kingdom? which some ancient Nasrean passenger left to witness for the Author of his Salvation, upon the idolatrous rocks of el-Héjr! The cross mark is also a common letter in the Himyaric inscriptions, which the ignorant Arabs take for a sure testimony, that all their country was of old time held by the Nasara.—I have found no footprint of the Messianic religion in this country unless it were in a name in Greek letters, which I afterward saw scored upon the rocks of Mubrak-en-Nâga, (ΚΤΡΙΑΚΟΣ).

We mounted our nâga, and came shortly to the Mezham. This is a passage, certainly, of the old gold and frankincense road from Arabia the Happy: there is none other such from the Héjr plain, to the highlands above, for loaded camels. The freeway lies under the eastward cliff, which we have seen to be full of old inscriptions. Every one of the shallow legends, upon the

soft sand-rock, was battered, it is very likely, with an idle stone: some of these antique scorings are yet white and clear, as any made of late years, others are wasted with the wasting rock.... The most are single rows of Himyaric letters; a few are Nabatean: among the rest were two or three lines upon which I dwelt in some confusion of mind,—because I could read them (Hebrew! or were they Christian names?) in Greek **ΑΒΗΒΖΙ—ΑΒΗΣΑΚΙΟ—ΓΙΟ ΒΕΝΙΑΜΗΝ—ΖΗΘΟΣ—ΙΝΙΕΝ—ΚΤΡΙΑΚΟΣ**. With all the pains in the world, I could faithfully transcribe only a good part, which were legible, of that multitude of inscriptions....

One would hardly expect to find the famous 'owls' of Athens in the desert of Arabia. Yet the following passage indicates both that they existed in quantity and that they are the evidence of a considerable, if indirect, trade-communication (1.112-113):

...We took up also certain small copper pieces called by the Beduins *himmarlī* (perhaps *Himyarīat*) of rusted ancient money. Silver pieces and gold are only seldom found by the Arab in ground where the camels have swallowed. A villager of el-Ally thirty years before found in a stone pot, nearly a bushel of old silver coinage. Also two W. Aly tribesmen, one of whom I knew, had found another such treasure in late years. Of the himmarlī, some not fully corroded show a stamped Athenian owl, grossly imitated from the Greek moneys: they are Himyaric<sup>10</sup>. Potsherds and broken glass, nearly indestructible matter, are found upon all the ancient sites in Arabia: none here now-a-days use these brittle wares, but only wood and copper-tinned vessels. Arabia was then more civil with great trading roads of the ancient world! Arabia of our days has the aspect of a decayed country. All nations trafficked for gold and the sacred incense, to Arabia the Happy: to-day the round world has no need of the daughter of Arabia; she is forsaken and desolate.

The archaeologist who laments the tendency of natives to pillage ancient ruins in search of building materials will find no consolation perhaps in the thought that even a cultivated amateur like Doughty could indulge in the practice when the need was sufficiently urgent (1.544-545)<sup>11</sup>:

<sup>10</sup>Doughty gives as illustration three pieces of Himyaritic copper coins with the statement that "they are imitated from the silver-pieces of Athens;—see the head of Pallas, the owl and olive spray and **ΑΟΕ**". The artistic value of the coins, which are frank but abominably inept copies, is negligible. B. V. Head, *Historia Numorum*, 1.188-189, adds a very useful note on the money of ancient Arabia, distinguishing the classes: (1) Himyaritic (c. 300-50 B. C.), from South Arabia, in imitation of Athens; (2) Nabataean (c. 145 B. C.-67 A. D.), in North Arabia; (3) Roman local currency (from Hadrian to Gallienus).

<sup>11</sup>There is another mention of this practice, together with a novel suggestion for meeting it, in a recent book by F. W. Lane, *Babylonian Problems*, x-xi (London, 1923): "All the laws in creation will not deter the Arab from robbing bricks for the construction of his domicile. If he is forbidden to delve in broad daylight for the bricks he requires, he will assuredly burrow under cover of darkness.

An archaeological survey could differentiate between the mounds to be reserved for excavation under scientific supervision, and those considered of minor importance. These latter ruins could be handed over to the Arab with free permission to use them as a field on which to prosecute his nefarious practices. In this manner many priceless relics would pass within the portals of our museums, which are at present utterly lost owing to the law of necessity by which the vandal is governed, or by his crass stupidity.

The tourist to Babylon should also receive consideration. He, or more probably she, will, in the space of a few years, become an ever-growing entity in Mesopotamia, whom it will prove more profitable to propitiate than to coerce. She will not leave Babylon until she is the proud possessor of a stamped brick. Get it she will, either by hook or by crook. Would it not be more judicious to collect some of the tens of thousands of stamped fragments that lie scattered over the ruins of Babylon and Birs Nimrud, and dispense them at a reasonable figure under official cognizance, than to make the tourist pay an exorbitant sum to an avaricious Arab, who would have no scruple whatsoever in knocking down an ancient piece of wall in the interest of his pocket?"

I had imagined, if those sheukh would trust me in it, how the haddâj might be rebuilt: but since they were ridden to Hâyil, the work must lie until their coming again. In their former building the villagers had loosely heaped soil from the backward; but I would put in good dry earth and well rammed; or were this too much enlarging the cost I thought that the rotten ground mixed with gravel grit might be made lighter, and binding under the ram likely to stand. The most stones of their old walling were rude; I would draw some camel-loads of better squared blocks from the old town ruins....

#### CLASSICAL PARALLELS

For purposes of comparison I have collected a number of miscellaneous passages which deal with situations or customs similar to certain familiar phases of classical life. There is no attempt to be exhaustive—the variety of examples would depend on one's interests. I arrange the passages roughly in groups dealing with (1) superstitions, (2) social usages, (3) economic ideas, and (4) literature.

(1) *Superstitions*.—The first passage cited below is a good instance of the belief in the 'evil eye' which is widespread among primitive and even civilized peoples. In classical literature instances are most frequently found in connection with ceremonial or at least social gatherings, e.g. weddings or triumphal processions, where abusive language is considered the best protection against evil influence<sup>12</sup>. Compare the modern survival in the form of throwing rice or old shoes at the bridal couple<sup>13</sup>. The wearing of the veil by Mohammedan women may be due not so much to the jealousy of the men as to the desire to protect the woman from the evil eye<sup>14</sup>. The second superstition illustrated—that of helping the moon in an eclipse by making noise—is equally widespread<sup>15</sup>. The reader will recall the words used by Juvenal (6.441–443) in describing the chatter of the argumentative female: *tot pariter pelves, ac tintinnabula dicas pulsari. Iam nemo tubas, nemo aera fatiget; una laboranti poterit succurrere luna*. In Tacitus's brilliant story of the insurrection of the army in Pannonia (*Annales* 1.16–28) the superstition plays a most dramatic rôle. Tiberius had sent his son Drusus to quell the insurgents, but the soldiers accused the envoy of unwillingness or inability to act in their interest. Everything pointed to violent action (*noctem minacem et in scelus erupturam*) when chance intervened, *nam luna claro repente caelo visa languescere*.

<sup>12</sup>The familiar sources are collected in Mayor's notes on Juvenal 10.41–53. To these may be added the story told by Apollonius Rhodius, 4.1651–1688, where the destruction of Talus is laid to Medea's evil eye.

<sup>13</sup>For this interpretation see E. Westermarck, History of Human Marriage<sup>16</sup>, 2.482 (The Allerton Book Company, New York, 1922). Some closer parallels to the passage in the text are given in 494, 495, 539–542. For a very sympathetic paragraph on Assyrian (i.e. Semitic) susceptibility to magic and the relation of this tendency to religion and ethics see A. T. Olmstead, History of Assyria, 622 (New York, Scribner's, 1923).

<sup>14</sup>See E. Westermarck, Magic Origin of Moorish Designs (Journal of the Anthropological Institute, 34.211). The expression *nube e* for the bride evidently has its origin in the veiling of the woman against the malice of enemies at this important ceremony.

<sup>15</sup>For the savage belief in frightening away the monster eating the moon see James G. Frazer, The Golden Bough, A Study in Magic and Religion, 1.211 (New York, Macmillan, 1922). A fuller treatment, with references, of the whole subject of eclipses in superstition will be found in Edward B. Tylor, Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom, 1.328–330 (London, John Murray, 1903). With this superstition should be connected those centering in the *turbo* or *rhombos*, a spell-binding board used by witches in their magic ceremonies.

The superstitious soldiers believed the eclipse to have an immediate application and to portend the downfall of their revolt. Accordingly, to bring back the light and with it their good fortune, *aeris sono tubarum cornuunque concentu strepere*, but with the final disappearance of the moon (behind clouds) the soldiers, utterly conscience stricken, yielded to the persuasion of Drusus (28).

Compare now Doughty, 2.191, 1.289:

I enquired of Amm Mohammed, "How sayest thou the jân be a-dread of thee! canst thou lay thy strong hand upon demons?"—"Wellah! they are afraid of me, sheyk Khalil! last year a jin entered into this woman my wife, one evening, and we were sitting here as we sit now; I and the woman and Haseyn. I saw it come in her eyes, that were fixed, all in a moment, and she lamented with a labouring in her throat. [I looked over to the poor wife! who answered me again with a look of patience.] Then I took down the pistol [commonly such few fire-arms of theirs hang loaded upon the chamber-wall] and I fired it at the side of her head,—and cried to the jin, 'Aha melaun, cursed one, where be'st thou now?' The jin answered me (by the woman's mouth), 'In the head of her, in her eye.'—"By which part enteredst thou into her?"—"At her great toe."—"Then by the same, I say unto thee, depart out of her." I spoke this word terribly and the devil left her;" but first Mohammed made the jin promise him to molest his wife no more.—"Is the devil afraid of shot?"—"Thou art too simple, it is the smell of the sulphur; wellah they cannot abide it."

This poor woman had great white rolling eyes and little joy in them. I have heard Haseyn say to her, "*Hul' hul* thou with those eyes of thine, sit further off! thou shalt not look so upon me"....

... there happened at the moment a strange accident; it was very unlucky I came not provided with an almanac. Seeing the moon wane, the housewives made great clangour of pans to help the labouring planet, whose bright hue at length was quite lost. I began to expound the canonical nature of eclipses, which could be calculated for all times past and to come. The coffee drinkers answered soberly, "It may well be true, but the Arabs are ignorant and rude! We cannot approach to so high and perfect kinds of learning."

(2) *Social Usages*.—The social customs of strange peoples have always fascinated men (before and after Herodotus), and I may count on this general interest as an excuse for reproducing the following three passages (1.556, 2.374–375, 1.248). The first will recall to the classicist's mind the Roman condemnation of dancing as undignified<sup>16</sup>; the second is a parallel to the Periclean<sup>17</sup> assumption of the inferiority of women; the last is an amusing reminder of the story told by Plutarch<sup>18</sup> of the youthful Alcibiades.

... When the Beduin friends insisted with me to let them see our holiday dance, I would not make a breach in their mirth, but, foreseeing their natural judgment, I was half-ashamed to show them the manner.—With that stern congruity which is in their wild nature, they found it light: 'Oh! what was that outlandish

<sup>16</sup>Compare Horace, Epistulae 2.3.232 festis matrona moveri iussa diebus, and the familiar passage from Cicero, Pro Murena 6, nemo fera saltat sobrius, nisi forte insanit. See Mayor on Juvenal 11.162, 172.

<sup>17</sup>The attitude is roundly rebuked by F. A. Wright, Greek Social Life, vi (New York, Dutton, 1925), who cites a description of the Athenians of the fifth century: "a small exclusive society of male slave owners, perfectly convinced of the inferiority of women and thoroughly satisfied with themselves".

<sup>18</sup>Alcibiades 2.

skipping and casting of the shanks, and this footing it to and fro!—it seemed to them a morris dance! but when they heard more, of our caroling, that his arm about her middle, every man danced it forth bosom to bosom with every fair woman, they thought of us but scorn and villany.

... We sate about the Bessām's (coffee) hearth—that altar of humanity of the Arab households! Others came in; and a young man said, "Among the customs of the Engleys, he had most marvelled to see [in India] the husbands giving place to the hareem. [The *gynalatria* of the Franks is unseemly and unmanly in the sight—beginning with the Greeks, of all Orientals.] Besides they lift the bernetta (Frankish hat)—that is the reverence used amongst them, when they meet with any dame of their acquaintance; but to men no!" Bessām, with an host's comity, expected my answer. I answered, "Our hareem are well taught: it is a manly gentleness to favour the weaker part, and that gladden our lives most—which are the women and children. What says the proverb?—*Béled el-Engleys jinnat el-hareem, wa jehennen el-khaij*, 'England the paradise of women, and hell of horses!'" I felt the Bessām blench, at the first clause; but understanding the conclusion, which came roundly off in Arabic, he repeated it twenty times, with honest mirth and acceptance.

... I remember one comely villager, who forsook it <tobacco> because the pipe-stem deformed the grace of his lips, would bring too soon his age upon him, and endangered an amorous breath....

(3) *Economic Ideas*.—Among the economic parallels I note three (2,387, 2,300–301, 1,233). The phenomenon of a free landed peasantry passing gradually to the position of serfdom is illustrated in the desert as well as in the Greece of the age of Solon<sup>19</sup>. The passage on entrusting deposits reminds one of Polybius's comparison of Greek and Roman practice in this situation<sup>20</sup>, and of the striking passage in the Letters of Pliny the Younger (10.96.7) where Pliny quotes with approval as one of the Ten Commandments of the Christians brought before him the injunction, *ne depositum appellati abnegarent*, 'Thou shalt not refuse to render up that which is entrusted to thee'<sup>21</sup>. Finally the notion of 'barren' money expressed below is reminiscent of the economic ideas of Plato and Aristotle<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>19</sup>See e.g. J. B. Bury, *History of Greece*, 180–183 (New York, Macmillan, 1922). Compare M. I. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, 285, for an interesting summary of the situation in Africa in the second century A.D.

<sup>20</sup>6.56.13–14.

<sup>21</sup>The law of Hammurabi, it is interesting to note, makes careful provisions for depositing under witness and bond and for the return of the deposit. See the translation in C. H. W. Johns, *The Oldest Code of Laws*, §§ 122–126 (Edinburgh, 1911).

<sup>22</sup>Politics 1.10. For a brief modern statement see L. H. Haney, *History of Economic Thought*, 48–49 (New York, Macmillan, 1913). The point of view would hardly be looked for in this late day, but it occurs, most vehemently, in the work of G. Parini, *Life of Christ*, 250–251 (translated by Dorothy Canfield Fisher [New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1923]): "This action of Jesus was not only the righteous purification of the sanctuary, but also the public manifestation of His detestation for Mammon and the servants of Mammon. Business, that modern god, was for Him a form of theft. A market-place was therefore a cave of obsequious brigands, of tolerated thieves. Among all the elements of the legalized theft which is called commerce, none is more detestable and shameful than the use of money. If some one gives you a sheep in exchange for money, you can be sure that he has made you pay more money than the sheep really cost, but at least he gives you something which is not a hateful mineral symbol of wealth. He gives you a living being, which will furnish you wool in the spring time, which will bear you a lamb, and which you can eat if you like. But the exchange of money for money, of coined metal for coined metal, is something unnatural, paradoxical and demoniac. Everything that is known of banks, rates of exchange, discount and usury, is a shameful and repellent mystery which has

... After the cup I said to him, "This is a good home-stead! I see palms and corn-land and camels; and here are great heaps of your wheat and barley harvest! ready to be trodden out: tell me, why keep you back the small price of my medicines?"—"Eigh, Khalil! Thou dost not know how it stands with us, I would God that all these things were mine indeed, as they be mine in appearance! Seest thou yonder camels?—they are the Bessām's; and nearly all this corn will be theirs to pay for their loan; and we must every year borrow afresh from them: wellah, it is little when I have settled with them that will remain to us. This ground was mine own, but now it is almost gone; and I am become as it were their steward".

... Hāmed answered, somewhat out of countenance, "Ay!—and keep this money for me, host, until my coming again." The Arabs are of an insane avidity; and Hāmed entrusted his gold to a stranger without witnesses! but for the most part the deposit will be religiously preserved by the Moslem receiver, to be rendered to the owner. The deposit may even become hereditary,—then it is laid up to be restored to the heirs. [confer Ex. xxii. 7 et seq.]. . . .

... They purchase only of the best beasts: although they bid high prices the Aarab are never very willing to sell them. The camel they think is a profitable possession, a camel will bring forth the camel, but money is barren good that passes quite away in the using....

(4) *Literature*.—Doughty's knowledge of the Classics was intimate. There are, consequently, in his book a number of references to classical incidents and stories. I can give but a few examples. The first is a very apt reference to Herodotus<sup>23</sup>. The second poses the Greek riddle of the Sphinx in a most unusual setting<sup>24</sup>. The third gives an excellent description of oriental storytelling, and suggests that the origins of the Greek novel are to be found in the luxuriant imagination of the East. The last selection, a description of Vesuvius in eruption, is long, but its magnificent prose and the unusual interest it will have for readers of Pliny's description<sup>25</sup> of the same phenomenon eighteen centuries earlier justify its inclusion in full.

The passages will be found at 2.130, 1.197, 2.131, 1.420–421.

always been the terror of simple souls, that is, of upright and deep souls. The peasant who sows his grain, the tailor who makes a garment, the weaver who weaves wool or linen, have up to a certain limit a real right that their wealth should increase, because they have added something which before was not in the world, in cloth, in wool. But that a mountain of money should bring forth other money without labor or effort, without production by man of any object to be seen, to be consumed, to be enjoyed, is a scandal which goes beyond, and confounds human imagination".

<sup>23</sup>Herodotus's story of the prisoner is found in 9.37. See Doughty 2,516 for another reference to Herodotus, and 2,350 for a fact in confirmation of Pliny the Elder.

<sup>24</sup>For the text of the enigma see the arguments to Sophocles's *Oedipus Tyrannus*, edited by S. Mekler, page 106 (Leipzig, Teubner, 1914).

<sup>25</sup>Epistulae 6.16.20. I may take the opportunity of pointing out to students interested in Pliny's account two parallel references from rather out-of-the-way sources. One, an eye-witness's relation of the great earthquake off Jamaica in June, 1692 (The Golden Book Magazine, 1 [1925], 458–461), should be noted in connection with the tidal wave of Pliny 6.20, (mare in se resorberi et tremore terrae quasi repelli videbamus). The other, a series of views of the eruption of Sakurajima in Japan (National Geographic Magazine, April, 1924, especially pages 467–468), gives graphic support to Pliny's description of the quantity of falling ashes (6.20.16): tenebrae rursus, cinis rursus multus gravis. Hunc identidem adsurgentes excutiebamus; operti alioqui atque etiam oblii pondere essemus.

... He told with wonder of some offenders who cast by night into the city prison, had wound and wrung their limbs quite out of the gyves and escaped; and one of them, because his foot could not pass the fetter, had cut away the heel, and was fled with his fellows!—The like is mentioned by Herodotus, of a Greek prisoner who never afterward showed himself to be of a worthy or manly nature—for will not a rat as desperately deliver herself, leaving even her limb in the trap?

... To drive the evenings in our now thin and silent company, the old man Nejm propounded riddles, over the coffee hearth. The Arabs were ready, they said theirs, and we guessed round; when the word fell to me I set them the enigma of the sphinx, saying, this was the most famous riddle in the world. Haj Nejm told over in his palm, all the beasts of the wilderness, and wondered greatly what this strange thing should mean; especially when I acknowledged that I had seen his footprints lately in the plain, not far off. When they could not unriddle that dark word-binding of the sphinx, they were delighted with the homely interpretation. Twice again I was taken in riddlers' company in Arabia, and have propounded my riddle, since I know none other: a Beduin weled, son of Oedipus, sitting amongst the second wiseacres, unriddled me at the moment; this kind of parabolic wisdom falls to the Semitic humour and is very pleasant to the Arabs.

In his fever days Abdullah, laying aside the cares of office, would ease his aching brows, in telling us endless Oriental tales (of Medina):—these are the townspeople's solace, as the public plays are pleasant hours of abandonment to the citizens of Europe. The matter is mostwhat that which was heart's joy to the good old knight in the noble English poet, "When any man hath been in poor estate and climbeth up and waxeth fortunate." But their long process grows in European ears (for tediousness) to a confused babble of sounds. He told of the climbing up of the fortunate son from the low degree to wedding with king's daughters; mingling in his tale many delightful standings by the way,—perils and despairs, gifts of precious jewels, the power of talismans, the finding of hid treasures, and the blissful renounters as "the joy that lasteth evermo," of separated affections; the sound of the trumpet and the battle, and thereafter the secure and happy days.—Yet their fables appear to us barbarous and out of joint, and (as all their dedale art) thing which cannot satisfy our conscience, inasmuch as they are irrational....

... In the year 1872 I was a witness of the great eruption of Vesuvius. Standing from the morning alone upon the top of the mountain, that day in which the great outbreak began, I waded ankle-deep in flour of sulphur upon a burning hollow soil of lava: in the midst was a mammel-like chimney, not long formed, fuming with a light corrosive breath; which to those in the plain had appeared by night as a fiery beacon with trickling lavas. Beyond was a new seat of the weak daily eruption, a pool of molten lava and wherefrom issued all that strong dinning noise and uncouth travail of the mountain; from thence was from time to time tossed aloft, and slung into the air, a swarm of half-molten wreathing missiles. I approached the dreadful ferment, and watched that fiery pool heaving in the sides and welling over, and swimming in the midst as a fount of metal,—and marked how there was cooled at the air a film, like that floating web upon hot milk, a soft drossy scum, which endured but for a moment,—in the next, with terrific blast as of a steam-gun, by the furious breaking in wind of the pent vapours rising from the infernal *magma* beneath, this pan was shot up sheetwise in the air, where, whirling as it rose with rushing sound, the slaggy sheet parted diversely, and I saw it slung out into many great and lesser shreds. The pumy writhen slags fell whissing again in the air, yet soft, from their often half-mile high para-

bolas, the most were great as bricks, a few were huge crusts as flag-stones. The pool-side spewed down a reeking gutter of lavas.

At afternoon, the weight of molten metal risen in the belly of the volcano hill (which is volcanic powder wall and old lava veins, and like the plasterer's puddle in his pan of sand,) had eaten away, and leaking at mid-height through the corroded hillsides, there gushed out a cataract of lava. Upon some unhappy persons who approached there fell a spattered fiery shower of volcanic powder, which in that fearful moment burned through their clothing, and, scorched to death, they lived hardly an hour after. A young man was circumvented and swallowed up in torments by the pursuing foot of lava, whose current was very soon as large as Thames at London Bridge.—The lower lavas rising after from the deep belly of the volcano, and in which is locked a greater expansive violence, way is now blasted to the head of the mountain, and vast outrageous destruction upward is begun.

Before the morrow, the tunnel and cup of the mountain is become a cauldron of lavas, great as a city, whose simmering (a fearful earth-shuddering hubub) troubles the soil for half a day's journey all round. The upper liquid mineral matter, blasted into the air, and dispersed minutely with the shooting steam, is suddenly cooled to falling powder; the sky of rainy vapour and smoke which hangs so wide over, and enfolds the hideous volcanic tempest, is overcharged with electricity; the thunders that break forth cannot be heard in that most tremendous dinning. The air is filled many days, for miles round, with heavy rumour, and this fearful bellowing of the mountain. The meteoric powder rains with the wind over a great breadth of country; small cinders fall down about the circuit of the mountain, the glowing up-cast of great slags fall after their weight higher upon the flanks and nearer the mouth of the eruption; and among them are some quarters of strange rocks, which were rent from the underlying frame of the earth (5000 feet lower),—upon Vesuvius, they are limestone. The eruption seen in the night, from the saddle of the mountain, is a mile-great sheaf-like blast of purple-glowing and red flames belching fearfully and up-rolling black smoke from the volcanic gulf, now half a mile wide. The terrible light of the planetary conflagration is dimmed by the thick veil of volcanic powder falling; the darkness, the black dust, is such that we cannot see our hands, nor the earth under our feet; we lean upon rocking walls, the mountain incessantly throbs under us: at a mile's distance, in that huge loudness of the elemental strife, one cannot almost hear his own or his neighbour's voice.—Days pass and the hidden subterraneous passions slowly expire, the eruption is at an end.

#### LATINISMS

The teacher who finds it profitable occasionally to point out to students the exact meaning of English words derived from the Latin will find the following list from Doughty's book useful<sup>28</sup>. The austere dignity and the slow-moving solemnity of Doughty's prose are enhanced by the deliberation with which he chooses words and by the 'antique' flavor which is thus imparted to his style. I cite but one example of each word, and, to save space, I have made the illustrative reference as curtailed as possible.

*Cede* (= yield).—... To cede to the tyranny of a servant.... (2.45).

*Century* (= hundred).—... < Cattle-marks > are the Beduins' only records and they remain for centuries of years (1.126).

<sup>28</sup>See also my article, Some Latinisms in English, THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 21.57–61.—I give only a few of the very many examples that might be cited from Doughty.

*Certify* (= make certain, inform).—...this seemed to certify him....(1.141).

*Commination* (= warning).—...formal and superstitious comminations (1.193).

*Confide* (= trust).—...I...confided that...I should yet live and finally escape them (2.396).

*Confirm* (= make steady).—...I thought to raise them upon easy curves, confirmed against the thrust by tie-walls....(1.545).

*Conscience* (= knowledge).—...<Cattle> have a perfect conscience of all watering places of their home dura....(1.350).

*Crepitation* (= crackling).—...the ears tingle with a flickering shrillness, a subtle crepitition it seems....(1.323).

*Curious* (= careful).—...expeditious more than curious, and naturally imperfect workmen....(1.115).

*Elated* (= raised).—...the head is elated from a strutting breast....(1.501).

*Event* (= outcome).—Enormous indeed has been the event of Mohammed's religious faction....(1.100).

*Expect* (= await).—...Bessam, with an host's comity, expected my answer....(2.374).

*Farrago* (= mixture).—...When I said I could never find better than a headache in the farrago of the koran....(2.51).

*Fell* (= skin).—...Common misdoers and thieves are beaten with palm-leaf rods that are to be green and not in the dry, which (they say) would break fell and bones....(2.368).

*Flagrant* (= blazing).—...This shaykhess...cast upon them her flagrant great eyes....(2.276).

*Fructuously* (= fruitfully, successfully).—...whereso he passed he glosed so fructuously....(2.251).

*Honest* (= honorable).—...for in <the Arabs' eyes> eyes it were not honest to linger at the dish....(2.352).

*Horrid* (= irregular, jagged).—...We were engaged in the horrid lava beds....(2.71).

*Immane* (= huge).—...there appeared before us the immane black platform of the Harra mountain....(1.356).

*Impatient* (= unable to endure).—...the horse...is a creature very impatient of hunger and thirst....(1.261).

*Impudent* (= shameless).—...and beggarly haggling for any trifle, with...impudent promises....(1.265).

*Iniquity* (=unfairness).—...One who came in...thus reproached the iniquity of the farmer, "...pay the hakim his due, or know that the Lord is above thee"....(2.388).

*Patience* (= endurance).—...their bodies are...hardened to a long patience of fatigue and hunger....(1.472).

*Remit* (= send back).—...In few hours the fetor of a battlefield was in our nostrils, which the night remitted....(1.393).

*Rumour* (= noise).—I was startled...by wailing cries and a rumour....(1.14).

*Scelerat* (= criminal).—...they are too religious and too very scelerat at once!....(2.39).

*Secular* (= periodic, seasonal).—...the desolate soil is blown naked by the secular winds....(1.56).

*Talion* (= law of retaliation).—...for danger of his country's laws or of some private talion....(1.541).

*Valid* (=strong).—...With the finest blades in a valid hand....(1.457).

*Vatiocination* (= prophecy).—...his youth was full of dim vatiocination of himself....(2.378).

*Verecundity* (= modesty).—...The maidens...are of a virginal circumspect verecundity....(1.322).

*Vernile* (= slavish).—...roused me with haste and violence in their vernile manner....(2.11).

*Vility* (= worthlessness).—...who of their natural vility were busybodies....(1.556).

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#### ROMAN WOMEN AND MEN'S CAREERS

Since the World War the question of women entering upon careers formerly reserved for men has been much to the fore. But the fact itself is not so recent. Ausonius (*Parentalia* 6.6-8; page 33 of the edition by Peiper [Teubner, Leipzig, 1886]) tells us that his aunt, Aemilia Hilaria, gave up all thoughts of marriage and devoted herself to a medical career. He does not entirely approve of her action<sup>1</sup>:

...more virum medicis artibus experiens.  
Feminei sexus odium tibi semper, et inde  
crevit devotae virginitatis amor.

Before him, Juvenal (6.434-456) showed bitter hostility to literary women, who pit one poet against another and monopolize the conversation at table. I deprecate such omniscience in a woman, Juvenal exclaims. It is not right for a woman to be so learned, to consult and thumb Palaemon's treatise on grammar. She is exceeding the limits of her sex, encroaching upon man's province. Let there be some things too in books which she does not understand (451): sed quaerad ex libris et non intellegat. He ends with an expression of sympathy for the husband: *soloecismum liceat fecisse marito*, 'let a husband be privileged to make a slip in grammar'.

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#### THE CLASSICAL CLUB OF PHILADELPHIA

The 201st meeting of The Classical Club was held on Friday, January 4, 1929 with twenty-seven members present. The paper of the evening was read by Dr. Howard M. Stueckert, of the Episcopal Academy, at Overbrook, Pennsylvania. The subject was Life on the Western Frontier of the Roman Empire. Dr. Stueckert presented a keen analysis of conditions on the German and British frontiers during some 300 years, showing the development and the decline of the frontier civilization in all its phases. Finally he spoke of the development of our own frontier, whose different history was largely due to the fact that it was populated through a race-migration; the conditions on the Roman imperial frontiers were wholly different.

B. W. MITCHELL,  
*Secretary*

<sup>1</sup>It may be recalled that Martial (2.90.9) had no special fondness for the blue-stocking who usurps man's learning: *sit mihi verna satur, sit non doctissima coniuncta*.

In the fourth century Eustochium, Marcella, and other women studied Hebrew and Biblical exegesis. Jerome (*Epistula 59*) tells us that Marcella stimulated him by her subtle questionings.

**CLASSICAL ARTICLES IN NON-CLASSICAL  
PERIODICALS**

**II**

Harpers Magazine—November, The Wine Peculiar to Cyprus, Samuel McCoy [Aphrodite's birthplace, in fact and fancy].

Letters (University of Kentucky)—November, Science Among the Greeks and Obiter Dicta, Glanville Terrell.

Nineteenth Century and After—September, Babies in Ancient Literature, W. B. Sedgwick ["perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the case is the negative aspect: babies are, indeed, conspicuously absent from most classical literature—if by classical we understand Greek and Latin.... Not only is there little reference to babyhood in classical literature, but there is actually no word at all for 'baby' in Latin, and no satisfactory one in Greek". Quotations are given from Homer, Sappho, Euripides, Theocritus, Simonides, Plutarch, the Greek Anthology, Theophrastus, Plautus, Cicero, Vergil, Statius, Catullus]; The Image that Fell Down from Jupiter, Arthur R. Hinks [a discussion of meteors, comets, and meteorites].—November, Field Archaeology as a Profession, F. G. Kenyon [there should be "a fresh supply of men...to meet the increasing opportunities now opening before us"]; Diana of the Ephesians, Annie S. D. Maunder [Diana's "icon was one that 'was fallen from Zeus', meaning that it was a meteorite whose fall to earth (probably at Ortygia) was actually witnessed, the time of its fall being before—perhaps two or three centuries before—the eighth century B. C." Observations on Mr. Hinks's paper].

Saturday Review of Literature—December 1, Review, favorable, by C. Alexander Robinson, Jr., of Pierre Jouget, Macedonian Imperialism and the Hellenization of the East.—December 29, Review, favorable, by Hetty Goldman, of Sir Arthur Evans, The Palace of Minos at Knossos, Vol. II, Parts 1 and 2; Review, favorable, by Edward C. Streeter, of Charles Singer, A Short History of Medicine ["a brief, clear summary of the evolution of medical doctrines as held today"].

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**A MODERN PARALLEL TO SPARTAN LIFE**

The Nation (CXXVI, 3281, May 23, 1928) contains an article on communistic farm colonies in Palestine, the so-called *kvutzot*. When a woman bears a child, she cares for it until it is weaned. It is then turned over to nurse and teacher in the children's house maintained by the community, and the mother returns to her work. While she and her husband have a room for themselves, they eat in the large dining room with the others, and during the week see their children for only a few moments at the noon rest period, and for

an hour or more, if they choose, when the day's work is done. On the Sabbath parents and children are together. The mothers are the most emphatic in their approval of the cooperative rearing of children.

HUNTER COLLEGE

ERNST RIESS

**THE MENTION OF DEATH AND KNIVES  
AND FORKS**

In the New York Herald-Tribune for Sunday, January 6, 1929, appeared an article by Mr. Frederick Hollowell, one of the staff correspondents of that paper, entitled Vatican Acts to Combat 'Pagan' Superstitions Throughout Italy. In the course of his article, Mr. Hollowell writes: "How prevalent this habit is of touching metal was strikingly illustrated during an official luncheon which I attended. The principal speaker during the speech took occasion to allude to death merely in an abstract sense. In a second the rattling of knives and forks was heard all around the table as the guests touched metal."

All peoples in all ages have considered death uncanny. A Roman, for instance, would not dedicate a temple if a member of his family lay dead (Livy 2.8.7). According to Petronius (134.1) one's strength could be impaired by treading on a corpse. The Flamen Dialis was not allowed to set foot on a grave or to touch a dead body (Gellius 10.15).

Now, strangely enough, not only was death dangerous when a corpse was present, but the mere mention of death was sufficient to cause uneasiness. This is based on a well-known principle of sympathetic magic, that something like a person or a thing is, in effect, the person himself or the thing itself, that similarity in thought is similarity in fact. Thus, also, in private rites among the Romans, the mere name of a person, whether it was spoken or written, was sufficient to make the rite effective. In the case recorded by Mr. Hollowell, the mere mention of death caused the gentlemen present at the luncheon to rattle their knives and their forks.

Why did they rattle these implements? The answer goes far back, into the pre-history of the race, before metals were used, when stone only was employed. After the coming of a strange new material, iron for example, at the beginning of the iron age, the conservatism of religion forbade its use. The same principle would apply to other metals when they were introduced. In the case cited in the Herald-Tribune, however, any metal at all would have been touched at the mention of death.

Now the reason for touching the metal seems to me to be this. Death is dangerous; the metal is dangerous. On the principle of homoeopathic sympathy, the way to drive out an evil is to imitate the evil. For example, the grinning of the Luperci at the Lupercalia was originally calculated to keep away wolves. On this principle, the touching of the dangerous metal brings the person in contact with a tabooed substance which drives away the evil arising from the mention of the name of death. To this must be added the fact that the noise created by the rattling of the knives and the forks was also calculated to drown the sound of the mention of death. On this principle silence was enjoined on the worshippers at Roman rites and music was played on the flute to drown all ill-omened sounds.

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